

Middle School Parents, Guardians or Caregivers

Instructor Guide

Objectives

- Convey the importance of starting the college planning process early to middle school students and parents, guardians or caregivers.
- Introduce basic financial aid concepts and terms.
- Share common sources of financial aid.
- Provide tools and resources for middle school students and parents to begin the college planning process early.

Materials

- Instructor Guide
- PowerPoint presentation
- Handout

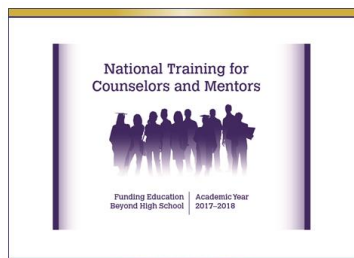
Trainer Tips

- This instructor's guide is just that, a guide. If you feel more comfortable training from the Power Point presentation, feel free to do so.

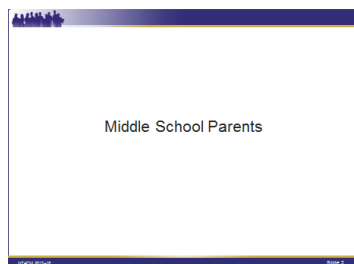
PowerPoint Outline

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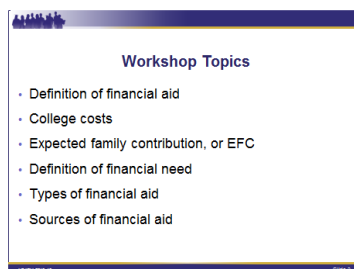
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Content

Note to Instructor: This presentation is intended to encourage middle school students and their families to begin financially planning for college early. It introduces basic financial aid concepts and terms, shares common sources of financial aid, and provides families with resources and tools that they can use to begin preparing financially for college.

Where do you see your child six or seven years from now? Do your aspirations for your child include college? Many parents want their children to earn a college degree but may not know what they need to do to make this dream a reality. During this workshop, we are going to talk about financially planning for college.

You may be thinking to yourself: "Why do I need to worry about financing my son or daughter's college education now? He or she is in middle school, not high school." Knowledge is powerful; the more you know about the college financing process, the easier it will be to make major financial and planning decisions when your child is selecting his or her school. Financially preparing for college is also easier if you begin planning early. Beginning to prepare financially for college while your child is in middle school will allow you to make more informed decisions about the college that is best for your son or daughter.

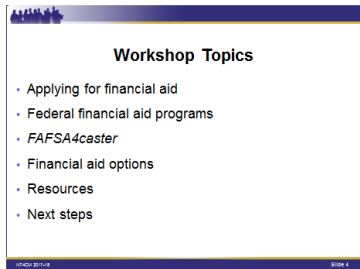
➔ Take a moment to poll your audience on whether or not they have started preparing financially for their child's college education. If they have, ask what steps they have taken, such as setting up a 529 plan or researching scholarships based on their child's extracurricular activities.

During this workshop, we will discuss the following topics:

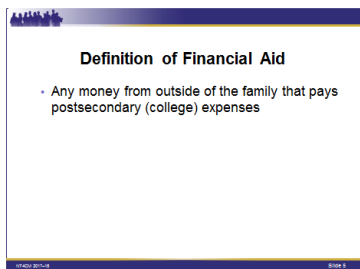
- Definition of financial aid;
- College costs;
- Expected family contribution, or EFC;
- Definition of financial need;
- Types of financial aid;
- Sources of financial aid;

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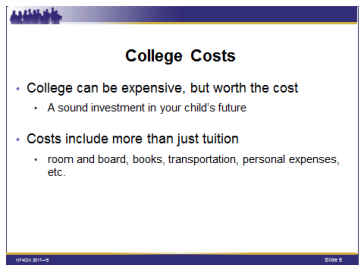
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Content

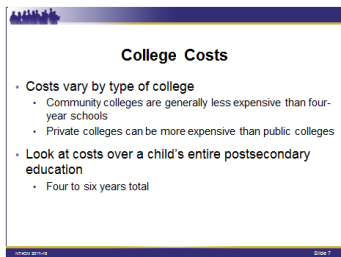
- Applying for financial aid;
- Federal financial aid programs;
- *FAFSA4caster*;
- Financial aid options;
- Resources; and
- Next steps.

➔ *Refer the audience to Page 1 of the Handout for the following discussion.*

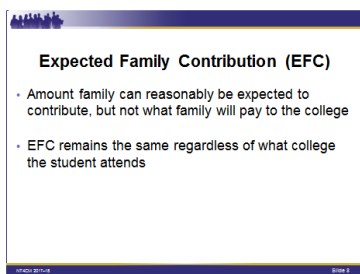
- Any money from outside the family that pays postsecondary (college) expenses.
- College can be expensive, but worth the cost.
 - A sound investment in your child's future.
- Costs include more than just tuition.
 - Room and board, books, transportation, personal expenses, etc.

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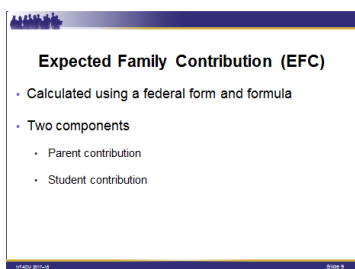
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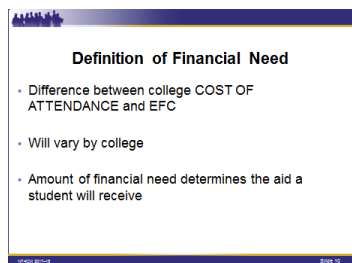


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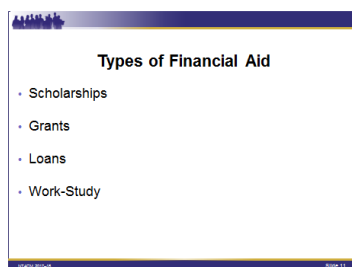
- Costs vary by type of college.
 - Community colleges are less expensive than four-year schools.
 - Private colleges are generally more expensive than public colleges.
 - View a school's Net Price Calculator to understand the true likely cost of attending that college.
- Look at costs over child's entire postsecondary education.
 - Four to six years total. Not all students will earn a Bachelor's degree in four years, and the longer period can end up costing more money.
- Amount family can reasonably be expected to contribute toward college, but not what the family will actually pay to the college.
- EFC remains the same regardless of what college the student attends.
- It is calculated using a federal form (FAFSA) and formula
- EFC has two components:
 - Parent contribution; and
 - Student contribution.

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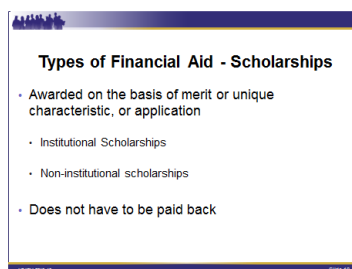
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Content

- Financial need is the difference between annual college cost of attendance and EFC.
 - Example: College cost of attendance of \$15,000 – EFC of \$5,000 = a financial need of \$10,000.
- The financial need will vary by college.

Amount of financial need determines the aid a student will be eligible to receive.

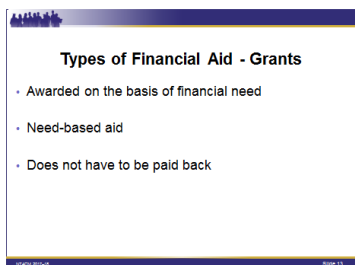
➔ *Direct the audience to Page 2 of the Handout to follow the discussion.*

There are four types of financial aid:

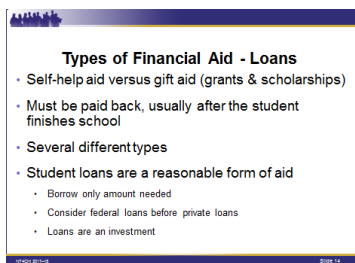
- Scholarships;
 - Grants;
 - Loans; and
 - Work-Study. Part-time employment on or off campus to pay college expenses.
-
- Awarded on the basis of merit or unique talent or characteristic.(e.g. merit-based scholarships, extra-curricular scholarships) or application.
 - Institutional scholarships offered by school
 - Non-institutional scholarships may be offered by organizations such as community foundations, employers, professional associations, and communities of faith.
 - Does not have to be paid back.

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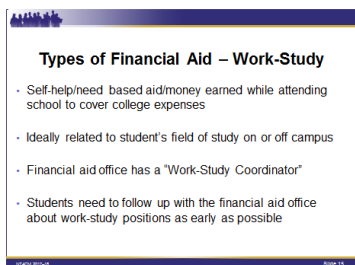
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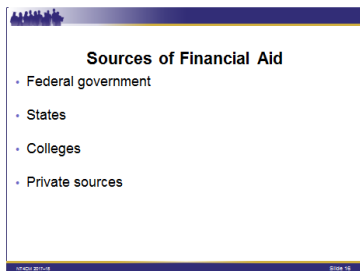


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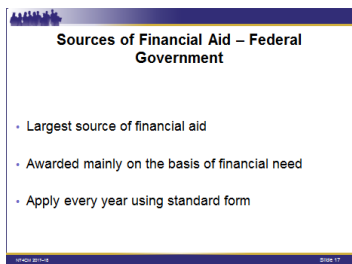
- Awarded on the basis of financial need.
 - Does not have to be paid back.
 - There may be academic requirements associated with maintaining/receiving grants
-
- Loans must be paid back (usually after the student finishes school).
 - Loans are considered self-help aid versus gift aid like grants and scholarships
 - There are several different types of loans offered to students attending college. (See Overview of Financial Aid Module)
 - Loans can be considered an investment since it can lead to increased job opportunities and salary. It will be a better investment if students borrow only what is truly needed to pay for college.
 - Federal loans compared to private loans may have a lower interest rate, longer grace periods and more repayment plan and deferment options..
-
- Self-help aid.
 - Earnings used to cover college expenses.
 - Ideally related to student's field of study.
 - Jobs can be on campus or off campus
 - Work-study is need based and first come, first serve meaning once the money has been disbursed there will no more jobs available until the following semester. Students need to go to the financial aid office and follow up as soon as they are on campus.

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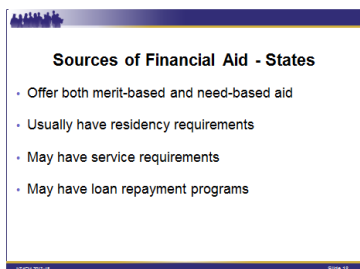
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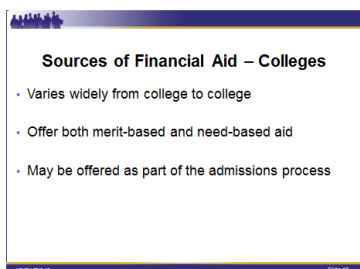
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Content

There are four major sources of financial aid:

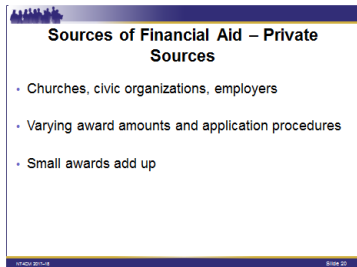
- Federal government;
- States;
- Colleges; and
- Private sources.

Federal Government

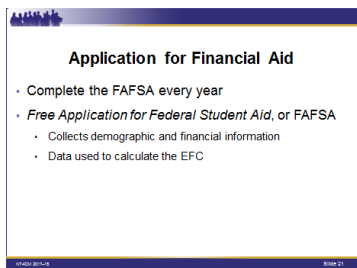
- Largest source of financial aid.
- Awarded mainly on the basis of financial need.
- Apply every year using the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA form).
- Offer both merit-based and need-based financial aid.
- Usually have residency requirements.
- May have service requirements.
- May have loan repayment programs.
- Varies widely from college to college.
- Offer both merit-based and need-based aid.
- May be offered as part of the admissions process.

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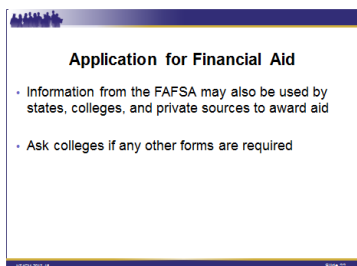
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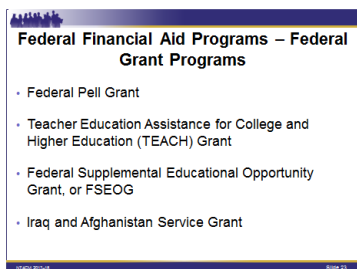


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- Private Sources
 - Churches, non-profit organizations, civic organizations, and employers.
 - Varying award amounts and application procedures.
 - *Small awards add up so don't underestimate their value.*
- ➔ *Direct the audience to Page 3 of the Handout.*
- Complete the standard federal form every year.
 - Form is the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid*, or FAFSA.
 - Collects demographic and financial information about the student and his or her family.
 - Data used to calculate the EFC.(Expected Family Contribution)
-
- Information from the FAFSA may also be used by states, colleges, and private sources to award aid.
 - Ask colleges if any other forms are required.

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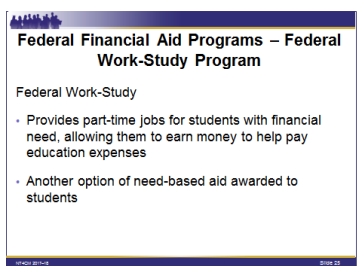
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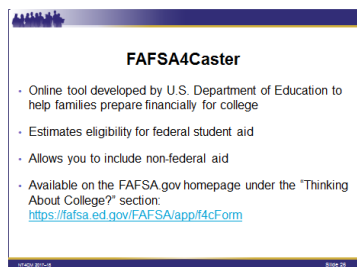
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➔ *Before reviewing the federal aid programs, ask the audience to name any programs with which they are familiar. Consider offering small prizes, such as candy, to encourage discussion.*

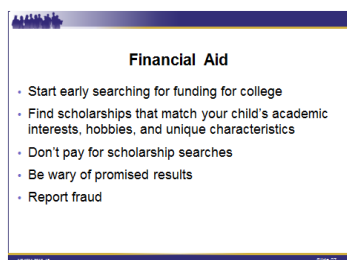
- Federal Pell Grant.
- Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education, or TEACH, Grant.
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, or FSEOG (Pell Grant recipients take priority)
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant (parents or guardian who may have died as a result of military service in Iraq or Afghanistan after the events of 9/11)
- Federal Perkins Loan Program
 - Campus-based aid offered by some colleges
- Federal Direct Student Loan Program
 - Need-based (subsidized) and non-need-based (unsubsidized) loans
 - Loans for undergraduate students
 - PLUS, Loans for graduate students (Grad PLUS) and loans for parents of undergraduate students (for those that qualify) – Parent PLUS
- Federal Work-Study.
 - Provides part-time jobs for students with financial need, allowing them to earn money to help pay education expenses.

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Content

➔ *Direct the audience to Page 4 of the Handout for the following discussion of the FAFSA4caster.*

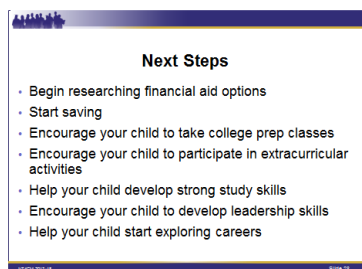
- Online tool developed by U.S. Department of Education to help families financially prepare for college:
<https://fafsa.ed.gov/FAFSA/app/f4cForm>
- Estimates student's eligibility for federal student aid.
- Allows students to include non-federal aid.

➔ *If time permits, ask audience members if they believe that the FAFSA4caster will be helpful as they financially prepare for college. If they think it will be helpful, ask what features of FAFSA4caster will be of the most value.*

- Begin early.
- It is never too early to look for financial aid to help fund your child's education.
- When your child is a high school senior, complete the FAFSA as soon as possible after the October 1st release,
- Find scholarships that match your child's academic interests, hobbies, and unique characteristics.
- Don't pay for scholarship searches.
- Be wary of promised results such as "We guarantee you'll get aid."
- Report fraud to the Federal Trade Commission or Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

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- Begin researching financial aid options.
- Start saving for your child's education.
- Encourage your child to take college prep classes.
- Encourage your child to participate in extracurricular activities.
- Encourage your child to develop leadership skills in-school and after-school activities.
- Help your child develop strong study skills and also explore careers and the education needed for those careers.
- Start a "scholarship brag book" – where every award and extracurricular activity is recorded in detail. This information is helpful when it is time to apply for scholarships.
- *My Future, My Way: How to Go, How to Pay.*
 - ED publication for middle school students.
- *College Preparation Checklist*
 - ED publication for all students.
- *Saving Early = Saving Smart.*
 - ED fact sheet on why and how to save money for parents of younger children.
- NASFAA's *Cash for College*.

National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators' booklet on paying for college.

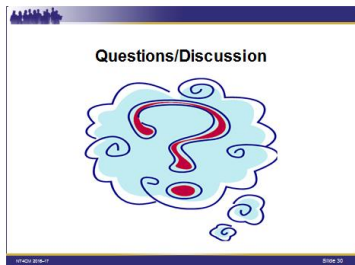
It is never too early to start the college planning process, especially when it comes to financial aid and financing options. The more information you have, the easier the process will be for both you and your child.

- Mapping Your Future
 - www.mappingyourfuture.org/MiddleHighSchool

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→ Take a few minutes to answer any questions.

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